

TDS Improves Survivability of B-1 **by Col Harry Calcutt**



The B-1 Program Office (ASC/YD) achieved another significant milestone in its plan to convert the B-1 Lancer from its nuclear mission to a conventional bomber. On 5 Feb 98, Maj Gen Robert F. Raggio, the Program Executive Officer (PEO) for the B-1, approved a Milestone III production decision for the Towed Decoy System (TDS) program. TDS is an element of the overall Conventional Munitions Upgrade Program, which adds precision munitions capability and improved survivability to the B-1 fleet.

The TDS program is an interim electronics countermeasures system that will significantly improve the survivability of the B-1 against RF threats until the more comprehensive Defensive System Upgrade Program can be fielded in the FY04-09 time frame. The TDS program integrates the joint Navy/Air Force ALE-50 Towed Decoy System on the B-1. TDS adds eight decoys that will be housed in two fairings mounted on the aft section of the fuselage. These decoys will be towed hundreds of feet behind the aircraft and provide a more inviting target for many types of enemy missiles.

The B-1 Program Office teamed with the Towed Decoy Program Office (ASC/SMNA) to achieve this milestone. The Towed Decoy Program Office will supply the ALE-50 components as government furnished equipment while the B-1 Program Office expects to award a contract (approximately \$120M) to the Boeing North American Company in May 98 to produce 84 TDS kits. Boeing is already under contract to produce seven low rate initial production kits as part of a congressionally approved plan to accelerate a

precision munitions/improved survivability capability on the B-1. In Jan 99, the B-1 Program Office will start delivery of B-1 aircraft equipped with JDAM precision munitions and TDS. These aircraft give ACC significant combat capability--24 JDAMs per aircraft with increased survivability in a threat environment.

The TDS modifications will be accomplished by OC-ALC in conjunction with the planned Program Depot Maintenance for the B-1 fleet. ACC will have an initial capability in FY 99. The modification of the entire fleet will be complete in FY04.